Episode 1: A Knight at the Theater

Cold Open

A reclusive British playwright is presenting his new play to Seattle. Anyone who's anyone is going. But after a ticket mishap, will Frasier?

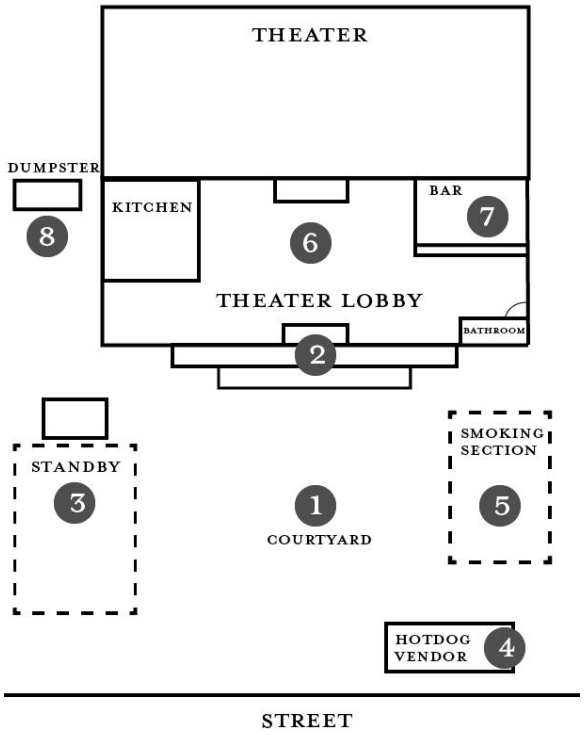
Designed for 5 players. Scale enemy health up or down if not playing with 5. There should only be 1 ticket per player available to be found max. If you are playing with less than 5, take away the easiest tickets to maintain the challenge. Not every player needs to find a ticket to complete the episode. It's funnier if they don't.

Based on "Hot Ticket," season 6, episode 4. The Showrunner can watch for reference but the players should not as it will spoil some plot points.

Remember: This is only an outline to structure the episode. Improvise, add, and change story elements to fit the decisions made by the players.

Act One

The cast starts the episode in the courtyard at point [1]. Refer to the map to the upper right.



Showrunner: *"You arrive at the Seattle Playhouse, an historic theater for classic performances and high society attendees. You stand in the courtyard in front of the majestic Art Deco building; wide stairs to the north lead up to the front door. [2] A young man stands there taking tickets. He is flanked by two beautiful stone lion statues. To the west [3] is the standby line; two old ladies, clearly not of the cultured class, wait for cancellations so they can grab a ticket to the sold-out show. They look pathetic grovelling for leftover tickets, and Frasier cannot bare to see their shame. A darkened alley leads to a dumpster beside the theater [8] to the northwest. To the east [5], some society men and women smoke in the smoking section. The show won't start for another few minutes. You can hear a rather brutish man advertising his hot dogs from his hot dog cart south [4]. What do you do?"*

Let the players make a decision, but before they can do it, they are interrupted.

Showrunner: *"As you make your way, you hear someone calling out from the smoking section, 'Oh, Frasier Crane!' It's Herb and Cathy Hawthorne. Herb is on the Seattle Arts Board,*

and Frasier's been eyeing a position on that Board for quite some time. Maybe Herb could put in a good word if properly impressed? Herb takes the arts seriously and is rather stuffy about it. Cathy, his wife, is less interested in the arts and sometimes seems as if she has a thing for Frasier."

Lead the conversation with Herb, who explains this is the new play by Benedict Chillingsworth, a recluse British playwright who hasn't written anything in 20 years. The show is completely sold out. Herb, of course, was able to grab a ticket because he's on the Seattle Arts Board. He's even grabbing a drink with Chillingsworth at the bar after the show. Frasier and his friends should join them! They can all discuss their impressions and interpretations of this ground-breaking work. Only a common fool would miss this opportunity.

The theater lights flash, and Herb and Cathy (after giving Frasier a seductive look) head inside; the play is about to begin.

Players now have control to go where they please.

The play starts after players finish 1 interaction. Act 2 starts after players find at least some tickets. Use your best judgment here to determine when a significant amount of time has passed.

Throughout Act One and Two, players with tickets may enter the theater, but warn them that doing so will cause them to temporarily leave their party behind. Once entering, they will watch the play and not make actions until its conclusion, unless they decide to leave the theater early for any reason.

Front Door [2]

The ticket taker is a young man in his late teens. If players show him their tickets, he will inform them that these tickets are for the matinee performance, which ended hours ago. He can't let them in.

- His name is Lars, 19, wearing an untucked white button down shirt and a strange pendant around his neck.
- Rude, doesn't take job seriously. Dad got him the job, and he doesn't care how powerful and respected everyone here is since he's from a rich family.
- If the player tries to talk their way past Lars, he'll say that they shouldn't try that on account of his dad being very powerful. Player must succeed an Audacious INT roll to know who his dad is.
    - Dad is Franz Gallaway, owner of the theater. Player who knows his dad can successfully threaten him and get group into the theater lobby [5].
- Roz's affinity for young men increases her social rolls against Lars.
- A player can recognize the pendant on Lars's neck with a successful Medium INT roll.
    - The pendant belongs to the Lithomancers, a group of magicians who can control stone.
- Players can fight Lars. If they do, Lars uses his amulet to bring to life the two nearby stone lions. If defeated, a player can loot Lars's Lithomancer Pendant with a successful Hard INT roll. Failing this roll causes the pendant to crumble apart in their hands. The Lithmoancer Pendant allows player to telepathically move stone.
- Lars the Lithomancer
    - HP: 50

    - DMG: 2K1
    - Lars attacks by magically flinging bricks (all inscribed with names of wealthy donors) from the building at opponents.
    - Killing Lars makes the Stone Lions crumble and die.
- Stone Lion A
    - HP: 20
    - DMG: 1K1
    - Rolling a 10 turns target into stone, immobilizing them for 1 turn.
- Stone Lion B
    - HP: 20
    - DMG: 1K1
    - Rolling a 10 turns target into stone, immobilizing them for 1 turn.

Standby Line [3]

The standby line only has two elderly women, Gladys and Rose-Marie. Gladys seems to be bragging about seeing *Cats* in New York City with her grandsons, and Rose-Marie hopes this show will having singing animals, too. They are clearly not a members of the in-crowd.

- Players can wait in the standby line. Doing so will cost them 2 Reputation periodically (up to a max of 6) as other society members spot them. How embarrassing!
- If players wait until receiving -6 Reputation, Gladys and Rose-Marie will grab 2 tickets, the last tickets available.
- Players can attempt to cut in front of the women or fight them for their tickets. Either results in winning **2 tickets**.
- They love Frasier's radio show! Frasier gains a bonus in SOC rolls against them.
- Martin's old man charm will increase his SOC rolls against them.
- Gladys the Hag
    - HP: 40
    - DMG: 3K1
    - Gladys attacks by pointing a crooked finger at a target; from the shadows, a black cat pounces then disappears.
- Rose-Marie the Witch
    - HP: 40
    - DMG: 2K1
    - Rose-Marie attacks by throwing poison vials from her handbag.
    - Rose-Marie can throw a health potion at Gladys and heal her for 1K1.

Hotdog Vendor [4]

The hotdog vendor is a surly kind of guy with his unbuttoned shirt exposing a hairy chest. He'll ask if you have tickets to the show in a suspicious way, his eyes darting from left to right. If you admit you don't, he'll offer to sell you **1 scalped ticket**.

- You can purchase a hotdog with a successful Easy WLT roll.
    - Eating a street hotdog will heal 2K1 and cost 3 Reputation. Ghastly peasant food!
    - Bringing this item into the theater will cost Reputation points and NPCs will yell at you.
- The scalped ticket can be purchased with a successful Hard WLT roll.
- The hotdog vendor doesn't have a vendor's license. Martin can intimidate him by flashing the badge.
- The hotdog vendor won't fight. *"Listen, bub, I'm just trynna make an honest buck over here."*

Smoking Section [5]

It reeks of tobacco and old money. No one is here at the moment. They've all gone inside for the performance. Niles coughs.

Alley with Dumpster [8]

A darkened alley. If players venture down this path, they'll find a dumpster and a back entrance to the theater. Suddenly, the door swings open, and 4 goblins in chef aprons storm out. One goblin yells back into the door, *"Mince your own garlic!"* They grumble to each other about forming a union and start walking off.

- If the players do not address the goblins, they'll walk off and this part of the quest ends.
- When prodded for more information, the goblins are standoffish, but they eventually explain they work for renowned French chef Céleste. She's an absolute nightmare to cook for. She won't even let you in her kitchen without a clean apron.
- Players can purchase the goblins' aprons with a successful Medium WLT roll.
- Players can challenge them to a fight. They will surrender instead of fighting to the death and give up their aprons.
- Goblin Cook (x4)
    - HP: 40
    - DMG: 2K1
    - They're covered in vegetable oil. Players periodically slip unless making a successful Medium DXT roll.
- If a player inspects the dumpster, they will find **1 ticket**, but they will suffer -4 Reputation for digging in trash.

Inside the kitchen, Céleste rudely states that you aren't those wretched goblins who wouldn't know a soufflé from a sofa, but if you have aprons, you may help her prepare the hors d'oeuvres: bruschetta with duck l'orange.

- Players must choose among themselves who will be Céleste's right-hand chef. That player will make 1 Medium DXT roll then 1 Medium INT roll.
    - If both rolls succeed, the bruschetta comes out flawless and Céleste allows you to enter the theater lobby [6] to give them to that "air-headed server."
    - If either roll fails, the bruschetta turns out lousy and Céleste angrily kicks the players out of her kitchen.
- If players attempt to fight Céleste, a butcher's knife instantly zooms past a player's face and lodges itself into the wall. Céleste sneers at the idea and turns back to her food. The players get the impression that a fight with her would be instant death, but if they insist...
- Céleste
    - HP: 200
    - DMG: 5K5
    - She attacks by throwing knives with pinpoint accuracy. This is not a fight the players want to be in, and she'll back off if begged.

Theater Lobby [6]

Showrunner: *"You enter the theater lobby. It is grandiose, from the crystal chandelier that hangs overhead to the velvet drapes dripping down the floor-to-ceiling windows. A gorgeous full moon is seen through the glass. To the north, you see the entrance to the actual theater, though the entrance is not a door. It's an ominous black mist, through which no light passes. To the east [7] is the bar. A young and quite handsome bartender cleans a glass. Also east are the bathrooms. To the west [8] is a closed door, presumably a kitchen. A server hurriedly steps out of the door holding a tray of*

hors d'oeuvres. She walks up to you and asks, 'Bruschetta?'"

- If a player takes a bruschetta, the server, in a timid voice, says, *"I dropped some bruschetta on the floor. Forget which ones...oh, I'm such a clutz! Please don't tell Céleste!"*
- Bruschetta heals 1K1. If the heal roll is 3 or lower, it was the bruschetta that fell on the floor and does 2 damage instead.
- Won't fight. It's her first day on the job!
- She is kind and happy to offer any information she knows, which isn't much.

When players approach the black mist, it booms in a deep, terrifying voice, *"PRESENT YOUR TICKETS!"* If players do not have tickets, it booms, *"THOSE WITHOUT TICKETS MUST LEAVE!"* as the black mist creeps along the ground, coldly across the players' feet.

- If a player attempts to walk into the black mist, their skin will grow unbearably cold, as if a great evil is creeping through their veins. It is obviously dangerous to pass without permission.
- If a player runs through the black mist despite the terrible warnings and sensations, the black mist will creep into their heart and swallow their soul, killing them.
- If a player rolls a successful Medium INT roll, they will know that attempting to pass the black mist without permission will result in death. They read about these black mists in *The Times*; they're all the rage in Paris.
- If a player has a chef's apron, delivered the bruschetta to the server, and there are 2 empty seats, they can persuade the black mist with a Hard CHA roll to let 2 players through since they're staff. The server will also appear and help you persuade the mist (since you helped her with the hors d'oeuvres).
    - This only works when the party learns of the 2 empty seats in Act 2.

Bar [7]

At the bar, the bartender cleans a glass. He's young and cute and makes eyes at Roz. Behind the bar, a rainbow-colored bottle of a mysterious spirit glows on the top shelf. A few seats over, you notice someone left behind a black leather wallet.

- Players can order a drink of their choice with a successful Medium WLT roll.
    - Drinking has no specific effect, but getting too drunk will negatively modify rolls and cost Reputation.
- The bartender notices that you're people of refined taste. He offers you a challenge: If you can properly taste the flavor portfolio of his 1956 Sage Noir, he'll offer you the entire bottle.
    - Each player can attempt this challenge once and build off the previous answers, but doing so moves time quickly, causing Act 2 and 3 to appear quicker.
    - The bartender pours you a glowing glass of this strange liquid. *"There are 5 potential flavors you might taste upon sipping the Sage Noir: fruity, floral, woody, earthy, and spicy. Only 4 of these flavors are actually present, and in a specific order. You get 3 tastes and 3 guesses as to what flavor is found first, second, third, and fourth. After each guess, I will tell you how many flavors are in*

their correct order, how many flavors are found in the wine but in the incorrect order, and how many flavors are not in the wine at all."

- In other words, if the answer is spicy, woody, fruity, floral, and the player guesses spicy, woody, earthy, fruity, the bartender will respond, *"2 flavors are in the correct spot, 1 is in the wrong spot, and 1 does not exist in the Sage Noir."*
- Succeeding in this challenge gives a player the whole bottle in their inventory. They may drink from it 3 times. Each drink heals 2K1 and adds 1K1 to their next roll.

- If the party considers examining the wallet, the bartender will say, *"The wallet belongs to the gentleman. He and his lady friend are currently in the bathroom together performing...their own opening night. No saying when he'll be back, but the cheapskate is a lousy tipper. Whatever you do, my lips are sealed."*
  - Whoever attempts to look in the wallet must do a Hard DXT roll.
  - On a success, the player manages to retrieve the *2 tickets* quickly before the gentleman and his lady friend exit the bathroom. They stay at the bar and don't notice the missing tickets.
  - On a failure, as the player fumbles with the wallet, the gentleman and his lady friend come out of the bathroom just in time to see the theft.

The man is in a tux with slicked back hair. The woman is in a silk red dress and hangs off his shoulder. He yells, *"Hey pal, what the hell do you think you're doing?"* He looks out the window through the velvety curtains at the full moon, howls, and turns into a wolfman!

- Greg the Wolfman
  - HP: 90
  - DMG: 2K2, attacks twice per round.
  - He swipes with his razor-sharp claws and bites with gnashing teeth.
  - Niles performs a Hard INT roll every turn. On a success, he finally remembers this man. Secretly tell the player that this is a former patient of his. Greg is a sexaholic known to cavort with prostitutes, which Niles surmises is the identity of this woman. Revealing this information out loud would deal heavy damage to Greg (5K4) but cost -10 Reputation for breaking doctor-patient confidentiality.
  - Closing the window's curtains will block the moon and turn Greg back into a man who has HP: 60 and only attacks once a round with his fists for 2K2 DMG.
- Krystal the Lady of the Evening
  - HP: 50
  - DMG: 1K1
  - She smacks players with her purse.
  - Rather than attack, Krystal will sometimes yell, *"Get 'em, Greggy!"* and heal Greg for 3K2.

- This is a fight to the death for Greg, but Krystal will stop fighting at low health if you pay her off (Hard WLT roll). If successful, a tenant from Frasier's building spots them paying off a prostitute and faints, causing -4 Reputation.

Act Two

It is up to the Showrunner when Act Two begins. Let the players find a few, but not all, of the tickets.

Showrunner: *"Intermission. A crowd exits the theater safely through the black mist. Herb and Cathy Hawthorne find you. 'Riveting first half!' says Herb. 'Yes...riveting,' mumbles Cathy. 'Hey, how'd you get out here so fast?'"*

Allow a pause for the players to make up an excuse.

Showrunner: *"'Well I need a smoke before the second half starts. Niles, come,' says Herb, who is under the impression the Niles smokes. Herb leads everyone to the smoking section."*

Herb will hand Niles a cigarette. Niles can choose to smoke it or attempt to talk his way out of the situation.

- If Niles attempts to smoke, roll Hard WIS.
    - On a success, Niles smokes without coughing.
    - On a failure, Niles hacks and receives 1K1 DMG.
- If Niles attempts to talk his way out, Herb should respond in a pushy manner. Offending him could result in a Reputation loss.
    - The difficulty of the SOC roll depends on how convincing the player's dialogue is.

Herb explains how much a shame it is that the Bunburrys couldn't show up; there are two perfectly good empty seats in the front row. Add some banter about the play among Herb, Cathy, and the players while in the smoking section. Consider forcing the players to lie seeing as how at least some are only pretending to have seen the first half of the play.

Showrunner: *"The theater lights flicker. 'The intermission is over,' says Herb. 'See you all back inside. And remember, we're meeting with the playwright at the bar afterward. I expect all of you to provide keen insight into the performance. Chillingsworth thrives on discourse of his work.'"*

At this point, those with tickets may continue back into the theater for the remainder of Act Two. Those without tickets must continue finding a way into the theater or risk looking like an absolute fool in front of Chillingsworth. And if that happens, Frasier will never get on the Seattle Arts Board!

It is up to the Showrunner when Act Two ends. Not every player needs to make it into the theater. Again, it's funnier if they don't.

Act Three

The play ends. The crowd lingers in the lobby until dispersing. The players are sitting at the bar when Herb, Cathy, and Benedict Chillingsworth arrive. Chillingsworth is an old man, hair gray like an overcast England sky. He is not concerned with fame and style; great art is what

drives his soul. When he speaks, he starts with a pause, carefully selecting his words.

Introductions are made. Players and NPCs may order from the bar. Then Chillingsworth will ask for the players' opinions of his play.

- Of course, the play is unknown to the players even if the characters saw it, but they must do their best to BS an intellectual response.
- For the Showrunner's benefit only, the play is about an old man and his son reconciling their difficult past in a working-class fishing town. It is a simple story. Think Hemmingway's *Old Man and the Sea*.
- Make up details about the play as needed.

Players must successfully impress Chillingsworth. He will ask at least one question directed at each player, and each player must make an actual verbal response. After each response, they must pass a Hard SOC roll.

- If the verbal response was good, add 1 to their roll. If great, add 2. If awful, subtract 1.
- If the player saw most of the play, add 2. If the player saw at least some of the player, add 1.
- If half or more of the answers succeed, Chillingsworth is impressed. If not, he is unimpressed.

The following are some questions Chillingsworth could ask players. Feel free to make up your own! Chillingsworth is not afraid to ask follow-up questions and challenge responses.

- "They say a specter haunts the theater, and that specter is narrative. What say you on this?"
- "At what point in the story did you reach catharsis?"
- "Daphne, you're from England. In what ways did the play capture England's tragic ethos?"
- "Martin, as an older man yourself, did you feel the father character truly evoked the ephemerality of time? And if so, in what way?"
- "What might Freud have said about the relationships in this play?"
- "Is the protagonist truly saved by the end?"
- "How do you think the sparseness of the set reflects the themes of the performance?"
- "Faulkner said the past is never dead. It's not even past. Your response?"

If half or more of the responses to Chillingsworth's questions succeed

Showrunner: *"Chillingsworth smiles for the first time and thanks you for your honest discourse. 'Stuffy blowhards pander to me all the time,' he says, 'but true words from true men and women of the theater are a rare delight indeed. I thank you for speaking with me tonight. You've given me much to consider.' Chillingsworth shakes your hands and leaves.*

"And then, you smell something burning, finally noticing that Herb and Cathy Hawthorne's eyes are ablaze. Herb speaks: 'True men and women of the theater? How absurd! You know nothing of the arts, you empty-headed morons! I invited you here to embarrass yourselves in front of Chillingsworth, not beguile him with your buffoonery! He was supposed to be impressed with us! With us!' Herb takes a drag of his

cigarette; the cigarette vibrates, and fwoosh! Crowns of fire blaze on his and Cathy's heads, and their outfits turn impossibly black. 'No one makes a fool of the Hawthornes!' growls Cathy. Roll for initiative."

Herb Hawthorne, Board Member of the Sanctimonious Flame

- HP: 180
- DMG: 2K2
- Herb attacks by shooting fireballs.
- Herb can blow flames from his cigarette into fire imps that have 15 HP and attack for 1K1.

Cathy Hawthorne, Smoke Golem

- HP: 130
- DMG: 2K2
- Cathy attacks by shrouding herself as a massive smoke golem and striking with scolding smoke fists.
- Attacks against her get lost in the smoke and miss if the highest roll is 3 or below (before adding modifiers).
- Cathy is secretly in love with Frasier. At low health, she can be convinced to give up because she does not truly love her terrible husband.

When defeated, Herb and/or Cathy become consumed by the fire within their jealous hearts, burning them from the inside out. The Cigarette of the Fabled Flame drops to the ground. Whoever delivers the finishing blow picks it up and adds it to their inventory, allowing them to control fire on a successful Medium WIS roll.

"I do hope nobody shouts, 'encore,'" says Frasier. Everyone laughs as we fade to black.

End of Episode.

If less than half of the responses to Chillingsworth's questions succeed

Showrunner: *"Chillingsworth clasps his hands together in silence before speaking: 'True words from true men and women of the theater are a rare delight indeed. A delight I am not afforded, it seems. Here you sit, besmirching my play with your filthy, nonsense ramblings! It's as if you did not even see my play! I write for the every man, not pompous upper-class blowhards who watch with closed eyes and feel with hardened hearts! You insult the very foundation of art itself!'*

"A cool wind fills the air, and you see snowflakes fall. 'Frasier, get out of—' but Cathy cannot finish her warning; both she and Herb are frozen in a block of ice. You turn back to Chillingsworth, but he no longer appears as an old man. Instead, before you, is a 15-foot tall dragon, blue as the Arctic waters and horns made of frost."

Benedict Chillingsworth, Dragon of the Modernist Winter

- HP: 250
- DMG: 2K2, attacks twice per round.
- Chillingsworth slashes with his icy claws and tail.
- Rolling 8 or above on an attack freezes the target, and they must roll a 5 or higher to break free.
    - Players can free themselves or free others with this roll.
- Chillingsworth can take flight for a turn, and next turn he will blast everyone with ice breath for 4K1.
    - When flying, can only be hit with ranged/thrown items.

    - Players can hide from this attack.

When defeated, Chillingsworth roars at the sky and shatters into blinding white light. Soon the white dissipates, the theater lobby warms up, and sticking into the ground is Chillingsworth's Fang of Frost. Whoever delivers the finishing blow picks it up and adds it to their inventory, allowing them to freeze an enemy on a critical hit.

Herb and Cathy become unthawed. Dropping to the floor soaking wet, Herb looks up at Frasier and says, "I give that performance two thumbs up!" Everyone laughs as we fade to black.

End of Episode.